23. A recombinant multimeric protein according to claim 1, wherein the C-terminal fragment of the α chain and the C-terminal fragment of the β chain each include two cysteine residues.

24. A recombinant multimeric protein according to claim 23, wherein the cysteine residues of the C-terminal fragment of the α chain are located at positions 498 and 510 and the cysteine residues of the C-terminal fragment of the β chain are located at positions 185 and 199.

25. A recombinant multimeric protein according to claim 23, wherein the distance between the cysteine residues of the C-terminal fragments of the α chain is greater or lesser than 12, and the distance between the cysteine residues of the C-terminal fragment of the β chain is greater or lesser than 14.

26. A recombinant multimeric protein according to claim 1, comprising at least one each of monomer A and monomer B, and at least seven monomers A and B in all.--

REMARKS

The above amendments have been made to insert required references to SEQ ID NOS of the Sequence Listing filed concurrently herewith, to indicate the insertion point of the Sequence Listing, and to place the specification and claims in better form for examination and allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable examination on the merits of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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